

PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Community Church of Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist

The Community Church of Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions, and life experiences. However, concern for the safety and well-being of the congregation as a whole must be given priority over the privileges and inclusion of the individual. To the degree the disruptive behavior compromises the health of this congregation, our actions as people of faith must reflect this emphasis on safety.

The following procedure shall guide us in actively and promptly addressing situations in which individuals' behavior threatens the emotional and/or physical safety of our members and friends. The privacy/anonymity of the individual will be maintained at all times, except in cases in which he/she poses a threat to others. The church will follow all applicable state laws including reporting procedures for child and elder abuse.

Every attempt should be made to resolve disruptive situations by addressing them directly, with compassion and concern, before resorting to the use of this procedure.

Disruptive behavior can negatively impact the church and its members in the following ways:

- Perceived threats to the safety of any adult or child;
- The disruption of church activities;
- Diminishing appeal of the congregation to its potential and existing membership.

The following shall be the procedure of the Community Church of Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist in dealing with these issues:

1. If an immediate response is required due to safety considerations, refer to the Emergency Response Procedure.
2. Situations not requiring immediate response will be referred to the minister. The minister will respond in terms of their own judgment observing the following:
 - a. The minister will respond to problems as they arise. There will be no attempt to define "acceptable" behavior in advance.
 - b. Persons identified as disruptive will be dealt with as individuals. Stereotypes will be avoided.
 - c. The minister will collect all necessary information including details of the disruptive behavior and its consequences.
 - d. To aid in evaluating the problem, these points will be considered:
 - **Dangerousness** – Is the individual the source of a threat or perceived threat to persons or property?
 - **Disruptiveness** – How much interference with church functions is occurring?
 - **Offensiveness** – How likely is it that prospective or existing members will take offense and/or be driven away?
 - e. To determine the necessary response, these points will be considered:
 - **Causes** – Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
 - **History** – What is the extent, if any, of disruption caused in the past?
 - **Probability of change** – How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
 - f. The minister will decide on the necessary response on a case by case basis. However, three levels of action are recommended:
 - **Level One** – The minister shall meet with the person in question to communicate the concern. The minister may initiate a mediation process if deemed appropriate.

- **Level Two** – The minister recommends to the Board that the person in question be suspended from specific church activities for a limited period of time, with reasons and conditions of return written and made clear (with copies going to the individual and to the congregational files).
- **Level Three** – The minister recommends to the Board that the individual be permanently excluded from church premises and all church activities. If it is agreed that the expulsion should take place, a letter will be written and sent by the Board to the individual outlining the reasons for this action, the individual's rights, and any possible recourse. If the individual wishes to rejoin the church at any point, they will be required to petition the Board.